

The treasure of groundwater

Introducing the new package to protect the biodiversity of underground water ecosystems

A simple and user-friendly software that allows you to assess the state of conservation of biodiversity in groundwater and “measure” its level of integrity. This, in a nutshell, is the objective of Aqualife. Underground waters account for more than 97% of fresh water on the planet, are the most important resource of water and harbour a diversity of endemic

species that to many is completely unknown, but of immense value. These environments are sensitive to alterations caused by human activities such as spills of pollutants that penetrate into the subsoil, excessive groundwater withdrawals, changes in the river bed and hydraulic and forestry regulations. At present, European legislation establishes obligations for the environmental monitoring of a body of groundwater, but does not recognise and include bio-monitoring systems. How do we preserve the integrity of these ecosystems? How can we determine their environmental quality through their

biodiversity? Aqualife has the answer to those questions! The five-year project, co-financed by the European programme Life, is aimed at testing an innovative and easy-to-use system of indicators for assessing the biodiversity of ecosystems dependent on groundwater. A project package will be produced and disclosed consisting of descriptive cards of the subterranean environments; keys to identify indicator species; software for the use of those indicators with built-in tutorials. The “Aqualife Package” will be available to the personnel of environmental management and monitoring institutions.

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Bio-monitoring of groundwater



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